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Wolcot

A Complimentary Epistle to James Bruce

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A

COMPLIMENTARY EPISTLE

TO

JAMES BRUCE, Esq.

THE ABYSSINIAN TRAVELLER:

By PETER PINDAR Esq.

——— *Non Fabula mendax.*

WONDERS!—WONDERS!!—WONDERS!!!

THE THIRD EDITION.

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EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

ILLUSTRIOUS SIR,

PERMIT a poor ſon of Apollo to make an offering of his Pamphlet (a ſort of widow's mite), for the pleaſure received from your five quartos. Aware of the dangers of launching into the foaming ſea of uſual dedication, in which many an unfortunate author has been drowned, I tremble at my preſent attempt. Exalted panegyric too frequently incurs the ſuſpicion of a ſneer. *Your* dedication, illuſtrious Sir, to the beſt of kings, ſtrikes me as the moſt perfect model of imitation—it is a column of Attic elegance and ſimplicity, erected to a deſerving monarch. Pray, Sir, did his auguſt Majeſty honour it with a peruſal before publication? It truly forms the *ne plus ultra* of human panegyric; and what is marvellous, cannot be ſuſpected of adulation. Pray, Sir, how much might his Majeſty give you for it?

What a ſimilarity, illuſtrious Sir, between yourſelf and Mr. JAMES BOSWELL; and yet what a diſtance! Both glorioufly ambitious, both great ſcholars, both intellectually adorned, both popular gentlemen, both dealers in hiſtory, and both deſcended from kings! But Mr. JAMES BOSWELL's ambition was not of ſo bold a wing as yours. *He* was content with a journey to Scotland, to exhibit Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, the Lexicographer, to the *literati* of that country. *Your* more exalted ideas could only be ſatisfied with a diſplay of the head quarters of the IMMORTAL NILE,

890896

NILE, who had puzzled the purſuits of men for ſeven thouſand years. Whilſt Mr. BOSWELL entertains only with a breakfaſt on ſpaldings (*alias* dried whitings), the ſublimer BRUCE treats us with a diſh of lion. Whilſt BOSWELL brings us acquainted with plain Scottiſh gentlewomen only, the gallant BRUCE charms us with romantic tales of QUEEN SITTINIA, &c. Whilſt Mr. BOSWELL preſents us only with an anecdote of a flannel night-cap, made by Miſs M'LEOD, for the Doctor's bald head; the ſublimer BRUCE tells of a piece of ſatin, and ſix handſome crimſon and green handkerchiefs, moſt gallantly tranſmitted to the beautiful AISCACH, of TEAWA. Whilſt Mr. BOSWELL amuſes us only with his drunken bout, and conſequently a ſimple emetic ſcene, the ſoaring BRUCE greets us with the more important hiſtory of a thundering DIARRHÆA. Whilſt Mr. BOSWELL prides himſelf only upon his deſcent from a Scottiſh King, the penetrating BRUCE diſcovers an origin from KING SOLOMON and the QUEEN OF SHEBA; which, under the roſe, muſt be eſtabliſhing a baſtardy in the family, as the Abyſſinian Queen could be nothing more than Solomon's concubine, their marriage having never been proved.

Pray, Sir, what may his Majeſty intend to do with your invaluable Drawings, &c. &c.? Are they to be engraved, *pro bono publico*, at the expence of the royal purſe; or kept *cautiouſly* locked up in a drawer at Buckingham-houſe, to induce the *dilettanti* to ſigh for the publication? Poſſibly they are deſtined to be a poſthumous work of the greateſt of Kings; but not like poſthumous works in general, to diſgrace the dead.

I am, ILLUSTRIOUS SIR,

P. P.

A

COMPLIMENTARY EPISTLE.

SWEET is the tale, however ſtrange its air,
That bids the public eye *aſtonied* ſtare!
Sweet is the tale, howe'er uncouth its ſhape,
That makes the world's wide mouth with wonder gape!
Behold our infancies in tales delight,
That bolt like hedgehog quills the hair upright.
Of ghoſts how pleas'd is ev'ry child to hear!
To ſuch is Jack the giant-killer dear!

Dread monſters iſſuing from the flame or flood,
Charm, tho' with horror cloath'd they chill the blood!
What makes a tale ſo ſleepy, languid, dull?
Things as they happened—not of marvel full.
What gives a zeſt, and keeps alive attention?
A tale that wears the viſage of invention:
A tale of lions, ſpectres, ſhipwreck, thunder;
A wonder, or firſt couſin to a wonder.
Myſterious conduct! yet 'tis Nature's plan
To ſow with wonder's ſeeds the ſoul of man,
That ev'ry where in ſweet profuſion riſe,
And ſprout luxuriant through the mouth and eyes!

What to the *vaſty* deep * Sir Joseph gave,
As of the world, the ſport of wind and wave?

* Sir Joſeph Banks.

What

What bade the Knight amid thoſe ſcenes remote,

Sleep with Queen Oborea in the boat?

What unconfounded leap to Newton's chair?

What, but to make a world with wonder ſtare?

What bids a ----- on Wimbledon, Blackheath,

So oft rejoice the regiments of death;

While Britain's mightier bulwark ſlighted lies,

And vainly groaning for its Cæſar ſighs?

What with the vulgar pigs of Aſcot taken,

Devour on Aſcot-heath his annual bacon?

What bade that great, great man, a goodly ſight,

Watch his wife's di'mond petticoat all night;

And what that wife of great, great, great renown,

Make her own caps, and darn a thread-bare gown?

What bade the charming * LADY MARY fly
MARCHESI's ſqueeze for PACCHIEROTTI's ſigh?
What MASTER EDGECUMBE deal in rhiming ware?
What, but to put all ‡ Cawſand in a ſtare?
Sweet child of verſe, who with importance big,
Pleas'd its own ſelf, and eterniz'd a pig; †
Whilſt mad an equal weight of praiſe to ſhare,
OLD MOUNT plays Punchenello to a hair.
What makes a girl the ſhops for novels rove?
The ſweet impoſſibilities of love;

* Lady Mary Duncan.

‡ A ſmall fiſhing town near Mount Edgecumbe.

† This pig, Cupid, who many years ago fell in love with the Earl, has a monument erected to his memory, with an inſcription on it by Lord Valletort, the Earl's ſon.—It is ſaid, that His Majeſty, when at Mount Edgecumbe, happening to be gravely pondering near his grave, the Queen, who was at ſome diſtance, aſked him, what he was looking at ſo ſeriouſly. His Majeſty, with a great deal of humour, immediately replied, "The family vault, Charly; family vault, family vault."

Quixotic

Quixotic deeds to catch the flying fair;
To pant at dangers, and at marvels ſtare.
What prompteth Chloe, conſcious of the charms
That croud the ſouls of ſwains with wild alarms,
To give the ſwelling boſom's milk-white ſkin
A veil of gauze ſo marvelouſly thin?
What but a kind intention of the fair
To treat the eyes of ſhepherds with a ſtare?
Behold! Religion's ſelf, celeſtial dame,
Founds on the rock of miracle her fame:
A ſacred building, that defies decay,
That ſin's wild waves can never waſh away!
What made *JOHN ROLLE (except for EXON's ſtare)
Drill-ſerjeant to the aldermen and may'r;

E'er

* Mr. JOHN ROLLE's dread of a failure in the *etiquette* of preſentment to his Majeſty when at Exeter, prevailed on him to take a deal of trouble with gentlemen who

 were

E'er from the hall he led his choſen bands,
To view the KING OF NATIONS, and kiſs hands?
How rarely man the haunts of wiſdom ſeeks,
Pleas'd with the life of cabbages and leeks!
Tho' form'd to plough the ſoil, divinely ſtrong,
'Tis famine goads him, like an ox, along:
But BRUCE, on *curioſity*'s wild wings,
Darts, hawk-like, where the game of marvel ſprings.
Let envy kindle with the bluſh of ſhame,
That dares to call thee, BRUCE, a thief of fame.

were to be introduced at the *Levee:* but, in ſpite of all his intellectual powers, which, like his corporeal, are of more than ordinary texture, much diſorder happened; indeed the beſt of kings was three or four times nearly overturned. Many were the gentlemen that Mr. ROLLE was forced to place himſelf behind, to pull down properly on their knees; and many were the gentlemen he was obliged to run after, and make face to the right about, who uncourteouſly, though unwittingly, in quitting the preſence, had turned their unpoliſhed tails on majeſty.

Pleas'd to thy wonder's vortex to be drawn,
A thouſand volumes could not make me yawn:
And (O accept a ſalutary hint)—
The world will read as faſt as thou canſt print.

Curs'd by the gooſe's and the critic's quill,
What tortures tear us, and what horrors thrill!
Thus that ſmall imp, a tooth, a ſimple bone,
Can make fair ladies and great heroes groan;
Tear hopeleſs virgins from their happy dream,
And bid for doctors 'ſtead of ſweethearts ſcream;
In tears the tender toſſing infant ſteep,
And from its eyelids bruſh the dews of ſleep;
Where, with a cheek in cherub bluſhes dreſt,
It ſeeks, with fruitleſs cries, its vaniſh'd reſt.
Far diff'rent, THOU, erect in conſcious pride,
Coloſſal dar'ſt the critic hoſt beſtride;

Like yelping coward curs canſt make them ſkip,
And tremble at the thunder of thy whip.

How hard that thou, a buſy working bee,
Shouldſt range from flow'r to flow'r, from tree to tree;
Fly loaded home from ſhrubs of richeſt prime,
Egyptian, Nubian, Abyſſinian thyme,
And plund'ring * drones upon thine honey thrive,
Who never gave an atom to the hive!
Huge WHALE of marvel-hunters, further ſay,
And glad the preſent and the future day;
Speak! did no angel, proud to intervene,
Bear thee, like Habbakuk, from ſcene to ſcene?

Lo! moon-ey'd Wonder opes her lap to thee:
How niggardly, alas! to luckleſs me!

* Alluding to an Abridgement of Mr. Bruce's Travels.

Where'er

Where'er through trackleſs woods thy luckier way,
Marvels, like dew-drops, beam on ev'ry ſpray.
Bleſt man! whate'er thou wiſheſt to behold,
Nature as ſtrongly wiſhes to unfold;
Of all her wardrobe offers every rag,
Of which thy ſkill hath form'd a conj'ror's bag.
Thy deeds are giants, covering ours with ſhame!
Poor waſted pigmies! ſkeletons of fame!
To thee how kindly hath thy genius giv'n
The maſſy keys of yonder ſtar-clad heav'n;
With leave, whene'er thou wiſheſt to unlock it,
To put a few eclipſes in thy pocket!
Nature, where'er thou tread'ſt, exalts her form;
The whiſp'ring zephyr ſwells a howling ſtorm;
Where pebbles lay, and riv'lets purl'd before,
Huge promontories riſe, and oceans roar.

Thrice

Thrice envy'd man (if truth each volume ſings),
Thy life how happy! hand and glove with kings!
A ſimple ſwain, a ſtranger to a throne,
I ne'er ſat down with kings to pick a bone!
For ſmiles I gap'd not, crouch'd not for aſſiſtance;
But paid my ſalutations at a diſtance:
Yet live, O KINGS, to ſee a diſtant date,
Becauſe I've got a pretty good eſtate;
A comely ſpot near Helicon, that thrives;
A leaſehold tho', that hangs upon their lives;
Set to GEORGE KEARSLEY, at a moderate rent;
Enough for me, poor ſwain, it brings content.
Were heav'n to place a crown upon my head,
So meek, ſo modeſt, I ſhould faint with dread;
And like ſome honeſt biſhop, with a ſigh,
"Pity my greatneſs, Lord!" would be my cry.

Poets,

Poets, like ſpiders, now-a-days muſt ſpin,
E'en from *themſelves*, the threads of life ſo thin.
Nought pleaſeth now the rulers of great nations,
But books of wonders, and ſweet dedications.
Kings, like the mountains of the moon, indeed,
Proud of their ſtature, lift a lofty head;
Heads, like the mountains alſo, cold and raw,
That, ice-envelop'd, ſeldom feel a thaw.
O may the worſt of ills my ſoul betide,
For *me* if ever love-ſick lady dy'd!
If fatal darts from theſe two eyes of mine,
Play'd havock with fair ladies hearts, like thine:
No, no! I ever a hard bargain drove,
And purchas'd ev'ry atom of my love.

O BRUCE,

O Bruce, I own, all candour, that I look
With envy, downright envy, on thy book;
A book like Pſalmanazar's, form'd to laſt,
That gives th' hiſtoric eye a ſweet repaſt;
A book like Mandeville's, that yields delight,
And puts poor probability to flight;
A book that e'en Pontopidan would own;
A book moſt humbly offered to the throne;
A book, how happy, which the King of Iſles
Admires (ſays rumour), and receiv'd with ſmiles!

The fool, with equal gape, aſtoniſh'd ſees,
Through Wonder's glaſſes, elephants, and fleas;
But thou, in Wonder's ſchool long bred, full grown,
Art pleas'd indeed with elephants alone:

Hadſt

Hadſt thou been GOD, an inſult to thy ſight,
Thy majeſty had ſcorn'd to make a mite.
Know, where th' Atlantic holds th' unwieldy whale,
My heart had panted at the monſter's tail:
Had BRUCE been there, th' invincible, the brave,
How had he daſh'd at once beneath the wave!
Bold with his dirk the mighty fiſh purſu'd,
And ſtain'd whole leagues of ocean with his blood.
Then riſing glorious from the great attack,
Grac'd with the wat'ry tyrant on his back!

'Mid thoſe fair * iſles, the happy iſles of old,
Plains that the ghoſts of kings and chiefs patrol'd,

* The Canaries, or the Inſulæ Fortunatæ of the Ancients.

Theſe eyes have ſeen; but, let me truth confeſs,
No royal ſpectre came theſe eyes to bleſs:
To no one chieftain-phantom too, I vow,
With rev'rence, did I ever make my bow:
Gone to make room, poor ghoſts, ſo Fate inclines,
For gangs of lazy Spaniards and their vines.
But had thy foot, illuſtrious Trav'ller, trod,
Like me, the precincts of th' Elyſian ſod;
Full of enquiry, eaſy, unconfounded,
By ſpectres hadſt thou quickly been ſurrounded;
Then had we heard thy book of wonder boaſt,
How Bruce the brave ſhook hands with ev'ry ghoſt!
In vain did I phœnomena purſue,
For Wonder waits upon the choſen few.

Whate'er

Whate'er I ſaw requir'd no witch's ſtorm—
Slight deeds, that nature could with eaſe perform!
Audacious, to purloin my fleſh and fiſh,
No golden eagles hopp'd into my diſh.
Nor crocodiles, by love of knowledge led,
To mark my figure, left their oozy bed;
Nor loaded camels, to provoke my ſtare,
Sublimely whirl'd, like ſtraws, amid the air;
Nor, happy in a ſtomach form'd of ſteel,
On roaring lions have I made a meal.
Unequal *mine* with lions' bones to cope;
Thy jaws can only on ſuch viands ope.
O hadſt thou trod, like me, the happy iſle,
Whoſe * mountain treats all mountains with a ſmile;

* Teneriffe.

Bold

Bold hadſt thou climb'd th' aſcent, an eaſy matter,
And, nobly daring, ſous'd into the *crater;*
Then out agen hadſt vaulted with a hop,
Quick as a ſweeper from a chimney top.
O had thy curious eye beheld, like mine,
The * iſle which glads the heart with richeſt wine!
Beneath its vines, with common cluſters crown'd,
At eve my wand'ring ſteps a paſſage found,
Where roſe the hut, and neither rich nor poor,
The wife and huſband, ſeated at the door,
Touch'd, when the labours of the day were done,
The wire of muſic to the ſetting ſun;
Where, bleſt, a tender offspring, ranged around,
Join'd their ſmall voices to the ſilver ſound.

* Madeira.

But

But had *thine* eye this ſimple ſcene explor'd,
The man at once had ſprung a ſceptre'd lord;
Princes and princeſſes the *bearns* had been;
The hut a palace, and the wife a queen;
Their golden harps had raviſh'd thy two ears,
And beggar'd all the muſic of the ſpheres;
So kind is nature always pleas'd to be,
When viſited by favourites, like *thee!*
Strange! thou haſt ſeen the land, that, to its ſhame,
Ne'er heard our good -----'s virtues nor his name!
I've only ſeen thoſe regions, let me ſay,
Where his great *virtues* never found their way.

Alas, I never met with royal ſcenes!
No vomits gave to Abyſſinian queens!

Drew not from royal arms the purple tide,
Nor ſcotch'd with fleams, a ſceptre'd lady's hide;
Nor, in anatomy ſo very ſtout,
Ventur'd to turn a princeſs inſide out;
Nor, bluſhing, ſtripp'd me to the very ſkin,
To give a royal blackamoor a grin.
I never ſaw (with ignorance I own)
Mule-mounted monarchs ſeek th' imperial throne;
Which mule the carpet ſpoil'd—a dirty beaſt!
Firſt ſtal'd; then—What?—Oblivion cloud the reſt.
I ſaw no king, whoſe ſubjects form'd a riot,
And, imp-like, howl'd around him for his quiet.
Nor have I been where men (what loſs, alas!)
Kill half a cow, and turn the reſt to graſs.

Where'er,

Where'er, great Trav'ller, thou art pleas'd to tread,
The teeming ſkies rain wonders on thy head:
No common birth to greet thine eye appears,
But ſacred labours of a thouſand years.
Where'er the Nile ſhall pour the ſmalleſt ſluice,
The rills ſhall curl into the name of BRUCE.
And, lo! a univerſe his praiſe ſhall utter,
Who, firſt of mortals, found her parent gutter.
And, let me add, of gutters too the QUEEN,
Without whoſe womb the Nile had never been.
Thus many a man, whoſe deeds have made a pother,
Has had a ſcurvy father or a mother.
O form'd in art and ſcience to ſurpaſs;
To whom e'en VALOUR is an arrant aſs;

O BRUCE,

O BRUCE, moſt ſurely TRAVEL's eldeſt ſon;
Tell, prithee, all that thou haſt ſeen and done!
I fear thou hideſt half thy feats, unkind;
A thouſand wonders, ah! remain behind!
Where is the chariot-wheel with PHAROAH's name,
Fiſh'd from the old Red Sea to ſwell thy fame?
Where the horſe-ſhoe with Pharoah's arms, and found
Where wicked Pharoah and his hoſt were drown'd?
Where of that ſtone a ſlice, and freſh account,
Giv'n by the LORD to MOSES on the Mount?
And where a ſlice of that ſtone's elder brother,
That, broken, forc'd th' ALL-WISE t' engrave another?
Where of the cradle too, a ſacred ruſh?
Where a true charcoal of the burning buſh?

And

And O the jewel, curious gem, diſcloſe,
That dangled from the Queen of Sheba's noſe,
When, with hard queſtions, and two roguiſh eyes,
She rode to puzzle Solomon the Wiſe?
Sagacious Terrier in DISCOVERY's mine,
Shall Nature form no more a noſe like thine?
No more diſplay'd the pearls of wonder beam,
When thou, great man, art paſt the Stygian ſtream?
To Afric wilt thou never, BRUCE, return?
Howl, Britain! Europe, Abyſſinia mourn!
Droop ſhall DISCOVERY's wing, her boſom ſigh,
And MARVEL meet no more the raviſh'd eye;
Nature outſtep her modeſty no more;
Her cataracts of wonder ceaſe to roar,

Forc'd to a common channel to ſubſide,
And pour no longer an aſtounding tide?
O bid not yet thy lucky labours ceaſe;
Still let the Land of Wonder feel increaſe:
Thy loads of dung, delightful ordure, yield,
And bloſſom with fertility the field:
Gates, hedges mend, that Ignorance pull'd down,
And bring in triumph back each kidnapp'd town.
Though Envy damns thy volumes of ſurpriſe,
Bleſt I devour them with unfated eyes!
What tho' four JOHNSON cry'd, with cynic ſneer,
" I deem'd at firſt, indeed, BRUCE had been there:
" But ſoon the eye of keen inveſtigation,
" Prov'd all the fellow's tale a fabrication."

But

But who, alas! on Johnſon's word relies,
Who ſaw the too kind North with jaundice'd eyes;
Who rode to Hawthornden's fair ſcene by night,
For fear a Scottiſh tree might wound his ſight;
And bent from decent candour to depart,
Allow'd a Scotchman neither head nor heart?
Grant fiction half thy volumes of ſurpriſe,
High in the ſcale of merit ſhalt thou riſe:
Still to Fame's temple doſt thou boaſt pretenſion;
For thine the *rara avis* of invention!
And, lo! amidſt thy work of lab'ring years,
A dignity of egotiſm appears;
A ſtile that claſſic authors ſhould purſue;
A ſtile that peerleſs * Katerfelto knew!

Thou

* A late celebrated Philoſopher and Conjuror.

Thou dear man-mountain of diſcovery, run;

Again attempt an Abyſſinian ſun!

Yes go; a ſecond journey, BRUCE, purſue;

More volumes of rich hiſt'ry bring to view.

O run ere Time the ſpectred tombs invade,

And ſeize the crumbling wonders from the ſhade;

Croud with fair columns, ſtruck by Time, thy page,

And ſnatch the falling grandeur from his rage:

Give that old Time a vomit too, and draw

More of Egyptian marvels from his maw;

Bid him diſgorge (by moderns call'd *a hum*)

Scratch'd by ten thouſand trav'llers, Memnon's bum;

And, what all rarities muſt needs ſurpaſs,

The tail, the curious tail, of Balaam's aſs.

Say,

Say, what ſhould ſtop, O BRUCE, thy grand career;
Of Fame the fav'rite, and no child of Fear?
DANGER's huge form, ſo dread to vulgar eyes,
Pants at thy preſence, and a coward flies.
Where other trav'llers, fraught with terror, roam,
Lo! BRUCE in Wonder-Land is quite at home;
The ſame cool eye on Nature's forms looks down;
Lions and rats, the courtier and the clown.
Whate'er thine action, wonder crouds the tale;
It ſmells of Brobdignag—it boaſts a ſcale!
Fond of the lofty, BRUCE no pigmy loves—
Who likes a pigmy that a giant moves?
Again—what pigmy, with a form of lath,
Loſt in his ſhadow, likes the MAN OF GATH?

The bowerly hoſteſs, for a cart-horſe fit,
Scorns DAPHNE's reed-like ſhape, and calls her *chit*;
Whilſt on the rough *robuſtious* lump of Nature,
Contemptuous DAPHNE whiſpers "What a creature!"
Pity! purſuits like thine ſhould feel a pauſe,
More than half ſmother'd by fair Fame's applauſe!
I ſee thee ſafe return'd from MARVEL's mine,
Whoſe gems in ev'ry rock ſo precious ſhine;
Proud of the product of a world unknown,
Unloading all thy treaſure at the throne;
While courtiers cry aloud with one accord,
"Moſt marv'lous is the reign of George the Third!"
How like the butchers' boys we ſometimes meet,
Stuck round with bladders, in a London ſtreet:

In full-blown majeſty who move, and drop
The bloated burthen in an OILMAN's ſhop;
Whilſt country bumpkins, gazing at the door,
Cry they "*ne'er zeed zo vine a zight bevore.*"

I ſee old NILE, the king of floods, ariſe,
Shake hands, and welcome thee with happy eyes;
Otters and alligators in his train,
Made by thy five immortal volumes vain;
Weaſels and polecats, ſheregrigs, carrion-crows,
Seen and ſmelt only by thine eyes and noſe.
"Son of the Arts, and Couſin of a King,
"Loud as a kettle-drum whoſe actions ring,"
Exclaims the king of floods, "thy books I've read,
"And for thy birth-place, envy Brother TWEED."

O BRUCE

O Bruce, by Fame for ever to be ſung;
Job's war-horſe fierce, thy neck with thunder hung:
When envious Death ſhall put thee in his ſtable,
Snipp'd life's fine thread, that ſhould have been a cable;
Lo! to thy mem'ry ſhall the marble ſwell,
Mauſoleum huge, and all thy actions tell!
Here in fair ſculpture, the recording ſtones
Shall give thee glorious, cracking lions' bones;
There, which the ſqueamiſh ſouls of Britain ſhocks,
Rich ſteaks devouring from the living ox;
Here, ſtaring on thee from the realm of water,
Full many a virtuoſo alligator;
There, Bruce informing queens, in naked pride,
The feel and colour of a Scotſman's hide;

Here

Here of the genealogy a tree,
Branching from Solomon's wife trunk to thee:
There, with a valour nought could dare withſtand,
BRUCE fighting an hyæna hand to hand;
Which dread hyæna (what a beaſt uncouth!)
Fought with a pound of candles in his mouth:
Here temples burſting glorious on the view,
Which HIST'RY, tho' a goſſip, never knew:
There columns ſtarting from the earth and flood,
Juſt like the razor-fiſh from ſand and mud;
Here a wiſe Monarch with voracious looks,
Receiving all thy drawings and thy books;
Whilſt Fame behind him all ſo ſolemn ſings
The lib'ral ſpirit of the beſt of kings.

Man ſays, O BRUCE, that thou wert hardly us'd ;
That our great king at firſt thy book refus'd ;
Indeed look'd grimly 'midſt his courtier crew,
Who, gentle courtiers ! all look'd *grimly* too !
Thus when in black the lofty SKY looks down,
The ſympathizing SEA reflects a frown ;
Vale, cattle, reptile, inſect, man and maid,
All mope, and ſeem to ſorrow in the ſhade.

Steep is th' aſcent, and narrow is the road,
Ah me ! that leads to Fame's divine abode :
Yet thick (through lanes, like pilgrimaging rats,
Unaw'd by mortals, and unſcar'd by cats)
What crawling hoſts attempt her ſacred fane,
And dizzy, drunk-like, tumble back again ;

Faſt

Faſt as the ſwains, whoſe arms the damſels fill,
Embrace of elegance down Greenwich Hill;
Whilſt thou, Briareus like, with dauntleſs air,
Reſolv'd to raviſh FAME, immortal Fair;
Juſt like our London bullies with the w——,
Haſt ſcal'd the cloud-capt height and forc'd her doors!
O form'd the trav'lers of the eaſt to ſcare,
Although thy pow'rs are mighty, learn to ſpare:
Dog ſhould not prey on dog, the proverb ſays:
Allow then brother-trav'lers crumbs of praiſe;
Like thee, let others reap applauſe and riſe
By daring viſits to Egyptian ſkies:
But calmly, lo! thou canſt not ſee them paſs;
" This is a rogue or fool, and that's an aſs:"
Thus on a tree, whene'er the weather's fine,
JACK KETCH, the SPIDER, weaves the fatal line;

Beneath

Beneath a leaf he hides with watchful eye,
Now darts, and roping hangs the trav'ling FLY.
Again, moſt tireſome, let me ſay, Go, go,
Proceed, and *all about it* let us know;
Led ſafely by thine enterpriſing ſtar,
Hyenas ſhall not with thy journey war:
Uneat by tygers, dare the foreſt's gloom,
To bid the barren field of knowledge bloom:
Wave o'er new pyramids thine eagle wings;
And, hound-like, ſcent freſh tombs of ancient kings,
Which Time had buried with the mighty dead,
And cold Oblivion ſwallow'd in her ſhade:
And mind, 'tis HIST'RY's province to *ſurprize*;
That tales are ſweeteſt, that ſound moſt like lies.

F I N I S.

As the confeſſed ſuperiority of Mr. BRUCE *to Mr.* BOSWELL *entitles him to a more eminent mark of diſtinction, I have added an* ODE, *in my beſt Manner, to this* Complimentary Epiſtle, *which the Congratulatory Epiſtle to Mr. Boſwell cannot boaſt.*

ODE to JAMES BRUCE, Eſq.

O BRUCE, for this his ſhort and ſweet epiſtle,
Thou biddeſt p'rhaps the gentle bard "go whiſtle;"
Or ſomewhat worſe, *perchaunce*, that rhimes to knight;
That is to ſay, knights of the blade,
One time ſo buſy in the dubbing trade,
That, like to ſilver, it was ſhoulder'd bright.

Pity by hungry critics thou ſhouldſt fall,
So clever, and ſo form'd, to pleaſe us all!

Again!—by royal favour all-ſurrounded,
A balm ſo rich, like cloves and nutmegs pounded!
Thus the BAG FOX, (how cruelly, alack!)
Turn'd out with turpentine upon his back,
Amidſt the war of hounds and hunters flies;
Shows ſport; but, luckleſs, by his fragrance dies!

Safe from the fury of the critic hounds,
O BRUCE, thou treadeſt Abyſſinian grounds;
Nor can our Britiſh noſes hunt thy foil:
Indeed, thou need'ſt not dread th' event;
Surrounding clouds deſtroy the ſcent,
And mock their moſt ſagacious toil:
Yes, in thy darkneſs thou ſhalt leave the dogs;
For hares, the hunters ſay, run beſt in fogs.

Of

Of thee and me, two great phyſicians,
How diff'rent are the diſpoſitions!
Thy ſoul delights in wonder, pomp, and buſtle;
Mine in th' *un*marvellous and placid ſcene,
Plain as the * hut of our good King and Queen;—
I imitate the ſtationary muſcle.

Yet, boldly thou, O BRUCE, again proceed;
Of wonder ope the fountain head;
Deluge the land with Abyſſinian ware;
Whilſt I, a ſimple ſon of peace,
The world of *bagatelle* increaſe,
By love-ſick ſonnets to the fair:

* A houſe cloſe by the glorious caſtle of Windſor.

Now to Sir Joſeph, now a Duke, now Wren,
Now Robin Red-breaſt, dedicate the pen;
Now Glow-worm, child of ſhade and light, not flame;
To whom, of wicked wits, the tuneful art,
So very apt, indeed, from truth to ſtart,
Compares the nightly ſtréet-meand'ring dame.

Mild INSECT, harmleſs as myſelf, I ween;
Thou little planet of the rural ſcene,
When ſummer warms the vallies with her rays;
Accept a trifling ſonnet to thy praiſe.

ODE

ODE to the GLOW-WORM.

BRIGHT ſtranger, welcome to my field,
Here feed in ſafety, here thy radiance yield;
To me, O nightly be thy ſplendor giv'n:
O could a wiſh of mine the ſkies command,
How would I gem thy leaf with lib'ral hand,
With ev'ry ſweeteſt dew of Heav'n!

Say, doſt thou kindly light the Fairy train,
Amidſt their gambols on the ſtilly plain,
Hanging thy lamp upon the moiſten'd blade?
What lamp ſo fit, ſo pure as thine,
Amidſt the gentle elfin band to ſhine,
And chace the horrors of the midnight ſhade!

Oh! may no feather'd foe diſturb thy bow'r,
And with barbarian beak thy life devour:
Oh! may no ruthleſs torrent of the ſky,
O'erwhelming, force thee from thy dewy ſeat;
Nor tempeſts tear thee from thy green retreat,
And bid thee midſt the humming myriads die.

QUEEN of the inſect world, what leaves delight?
Of ſuch theſe willing hands a bow'r ſhall form,
To guard thee from the ruſhing rains of night,
And hide thee from the wild wing of the ſtorm.

Sweet Child of Stillneſs, midſt the awful calm
Of pauſing Nature thou art pleas'd to dwell;
In happy ſilence to enjoy thy balm,
And ſhed through life a luſtre round thy cell.

How

How diff'rent man, the imp of noiſe and ſtrife,
Who courts the ſtorm that tears and darkens life;
Bleſt when the paſſions wild the ſoul invade!
How nobler far to bid thoſe whirlwinds ceaſe;
To taſte, like thee, the luxury of peace,
And ſhine in ſolitude and ſhade!

ERRATA.

Page 3, line 14—For *make*, read *waſh*.
10, line 10—For *their*, read *your*.
13, line 4—For *had*, read *has*.
line 8—For a *period*, put a *ſemicolon*.
19, line 8—For *her*, read *the*.

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